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LOOKING TO ADOPT?

Are you looking for a new furry family member?

Visit www.eforeverhome.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.eforeverhome.org for our adoption schedule and available pets.



2018 Casino Night and Silent Auction

The date is May 5, 2018; the place is the Country Club of Fairfax; and the time is 7:00pm – 11:00pm. Historically this event has been held in Haymarket, Virginia, but we moved it to Fairfax County to make it easier for more people to attend. Tickets are on sale now at <http://to-afh.org/CasinoNightTickets>. The cost is the same as last time - \$80/person and \$145/couple.

We have added an innovation this year. All of our silent auction items will utilize an online bidding system. You can view the items at <http://to-afh.org/CasinoNightAuction> and bid online – right up until 10:00pm the night of the event. You can use a smart phone, tablet, or computer to bid. Just register now and you can start bidding right away. We will be adding more items to the silent auction, so stop back often!

We have some amazing silent auction items this year such as pet-related items and services; fun recreational activities (ziplining, etc); entertainment (theatre and concert tickets), and tours of Redskins Park and Richard Petty's garage. There is something for everyone and items in all price ranges.

We look forward to seeing all of our friends at this year's event. You can keep up with what's going on at:

<https://facebook.com/events/195004071077808>
<http://to-afh.org/CasinoNightAuction>
<http://to-afh.org/CasinoNight>

Come on out and join us for a good time while helping us raise much needed funds!

There is a chance that you will be on TV too, as we are filming a reality show for National Geographic.

CASINO NIGHT SPONSORS AND DONORS

As you may know, the purpose of our annual Casino Night and Silent Auction is to raise money for our own forever home. Our plan is to purchase and develop a property that will, for starters, generate revenue by offering pet boarding. It will also be our base of operations for administrative functions, humane education, and adoption fairs. Some of our long term plans for the property include a low cost veterinary clinic and a sanctuary for old, sick, and discarded animals. This facility will be called Imagine.

To make this event a success, we need sponsors and donors. Sponsors donate funds to help cover event costs. There are a variety of opportunities for you to support our organization, engage with other civic-minded members, and receive recognition for your company or yourself. Please email info@foreverhome.org to request a sponsor package.

If you prefer to help by donating an item or service to our silent auction, there is still time to do so. Your donation does not have to be limited to pet-related items. We are particularly interested in airline miles



(to turn into airline tickets); fine jewelry; experiences (recreational activities, entertainment, etc); spa treatments; children's activities/items; and of course, pet related items. Basically, if it's cool/fun/entertaining/useful, we're interested!

SPOTLIGHT ON

DOROTHY



Dorothy is a two year old pitbull mix who is a Hurricane Harvey victim. She was extremely skinny upon arrival and gradually put on weight. She walks nicely on a leash, lays in her bed, comes when called, likes the comfort of her crate, is house trained, and has basic house manners. She was professionally trained by our trainer.

Dorothy is a somewhat sensitive girl and at times can be a bit skittish. She is extremely toy and food driven and our trainers have been using these things to teach her new skills. She is learning to play nicely with others (meaning she is fine with other dogs who are friendly but is also happy to get into a tussle with dogs who think they should be boss)! Dorothy must go to a forever family that understands her breed and the obligation of a having a well-mannered dog. Her forever home will have to be committed to lifelong enforcement of the training she has had.

You have got to see her video! <https://youtu.be/ZnRo0tHT8fQ>

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

When asked to write what volunteering with AFH means to me, my first thought was that it's fun, I love dogs, and AFH finds homes for needy dogs (who bring canine companionship and joy to families). My next thought was that I really don't do that much so they should profile someone else. While I have been involved with AFH for years, I haven't fostered a momma and her babies, rehabilitated a troubled dog, or driven a transport a thousand miles. Surely someone else would offer a better perspective.

However, I came to realize that each of us giving our time, talents, and expertise is crucial to AFH finding loving homes for voiceless, defenseless animals. No task is insignificant! Whether



LYNN AMICO

assisting with transport, picking up donations, organizing the storage unit or van, fostering, supplying food, or responding to various other needs, each activity is an integral link in a chain that changes dogs' and families' lives.

Recently I was fortunate to participate with a handful of ladies in caring for a litter of rambunctious puppies while the foster worked long days outside the home. Together we alternated visits to give the puppies meals, have outdoor play, clean up the yard, and socialize them. While no one of us could fully support the litter individually, together we saved these wonderful dogs. It is gratifying to see a scared dog turn into a trusting pet. THAT is what volunteering with AFH is all about.

Our journey as an AFH foster family has its roots with personal tragedy. Around 2 a.m. on June 13, 2016, we received a phone call from the veterinary hospital that our beloved Bob had succumbed to a stroke. Bob was only seven and we had only had him for a year and a half. He was our third AFH pup. He just enjoyed life, was our partner in visiting wineries, and liked his eggs over easy.

We just weren't ready for another dog. Debbie came up with the idea that until we were ready we should consider fostering as our tribute to the "Bobster." That's when we learned of a need for a foster for an abused very pregnant 1 ½ year old Lab/Pit mix. After some discussion, we jumped in and picked up our first foster on August 15, 2016. Five days later we experienced the joy of seeing nine healthy pups born.



DEBBIE AND JEFF SCHLAGENHAUF

Since that time, it has been our pleasure (with some frustration) to host over 70 dogs and puppies. Each and every one of these innocent creatures brought their own special personality and the simple desire to love and be loved.

On the days that they go to their forever homes our hearts are filled with tears of joy for them and sadness that we won't wake up to them in the morning. We absolutely love receiving pictures of them from their adoptive families as they grow up. It is great to see them happy and doing well.

Above all, fostering has given us the opportunity to do good, to help save these lives, to see them grow into themselves, and to share their love with their forever families.



PETCO HOLIDAY WISHES

We received so many good stories from our adopters that we wanted to share one more. This one was submitted by Tori Jewell. It has been edited for space.

I'd like to tell you a story about my dog Chloe, who is living proof that good things come to those who wait.

After graduating from college, I knew two things: I wanted to adopt a rescue dog and I wanted to erase my debt. I worked hard for many months to pay off that debt. Finally, when I was nearing the end of paying off my debt, I decided to start looking for my perfect pup. I had been checking AFH's website for about three years, looking at all of the amazing dogs and wishing. That day, I checked AFH's website and Chloe was there. Her description was simple - something like "Chloe is new. She is pregnant." Next to this simple description were two of the cutest pictures of a smiling, beautiful girl. Her big brown eyes seemed to go right through me. I knew I needed to meet her! The second we opened the door, this little girl was all tail wags and kisses. It was truly love at first sight!

Chloe gave birth to nine puppies on 3/5/17 but they were all born very weak and refused to nurse. By 3/7/17 all nine of Chloe's puppies had passed away. A trip to the vet assured everyone that she would be ok but needed time to recover so for the next month or so I visited this beautiful girl and watched her heal. Eventually I was allowed to come and pick her up and take her home - one of the best days of my life!

We have learned that Chloe loves to chase squirrels, kisses so forcefully that she manages to get her tongue in your mouth no matter how tightly you close your lips, is the best co-pilot on road trips, and will always be available when you need a hug or snuggles. I don't know which breeds make up my beloved purebred mutt, but she is the best of all of them.

There were times, and still are, where I feel like there had to have been divine intervention to bring us together. It hits me in the simplest moments of watching Netflix on the couch with her at my side that my life would be so different if I had never met her.

Thank you, A Forever Home, for helping me find my best friend! Words cannot describe the feeling now that my family is complete!



GENERATE DONATIONS TO AFH SIMPLY BY WALKING YOUR DOG

You have a dog, right? Of course you do.

You walk your dog, right? Of course you do.

You have a smart phone, right? Most likely you do, and if not, maybe it's time to upgrade.

You can now raise money for homeless animals every time you walk your dog. Simply go to <http://to-afh.org/WoofTrax>, download the app, select A Forever Home Rescue Foundation as your charity of choice, and start the app every time you walk your dog.

Dog walkers - you spend your entire day walking so why not donate (at no cost to you) to A Forever Home Rescue Foundation every time you walk a client's dog!

Nothing could be easier so go to <http://to-afh.org/WoofTrax> and get started now!

Please share this information with friends, family, and co-workers.



DAISY AND JESSE HIT THE JACKPOT!

Walt and Toni Wallace adopted Daisy from AFH years ago. They also adopted several other dogs in the years that followed. Toni passed away several years ago and Walt decided to move to Las Vegas (with his dogs, of course!). Walt recently passed away and his remaining two dogs, Daisy and Jesse, were left without a family.

Daisy is a 14 year old Shepherd mix and Jesse is a 13 year old Westie. They were in fairly good shape for senior dogs, but even so, they would have no chance at a shelter since people gravitate toward puppies or a particular breed. Seniors are always overlooked and many are euthanized simply because too few people realize how wonderful they are.

Two friends of Toni and Walt actually flew to Las Vegas and drove both dogs to Virginia – what amazing dedication to the friends they lost! The plan was to have Toni’s brother take the dogs in but he was unable to do so. They then contacted AFH because Daisy is an AFH dog and they asked if we could help Jesse as well. Daisy and Jesse are extremely bonded and the hope was that they could stay together in a forever home for whatever time they had left.

We cautioned everyone involved that it is very difficult to place senior dogs but that we would, of course, take Daisy back and try our best to help Jesse too. It was probably in the back of our minds that these two would be forever fosters with one of our wonderful foster homes, but then it happened.....



We put out a request to our volunteer list asking for a foster home, and long-time volunteer Andi Dies responded that she was looking to adopt a pair of seniors in the new year as a combined birthday/ Christmas gift to herself! Daisy and Jesse never even made it to a foster home – they went directly into a forever home!

We are beyond happy to report that Daisy and Jesse have settled in to their forever home and are happy and healthy!

ARE YOU LOOKING TO BUY OR SELL A HOME?

We recently launched a new program, Home Referrals Save Lives. It’s an easy way for you to support our rescue activities without costing you a thing. If you or someone you know is looking to buy or sell a home, you can refer them to us by emailing Homes@foreverhome.net. For every home referral successfully closed through this program, A Forever Home will receive a \$500.00 donation in your name.

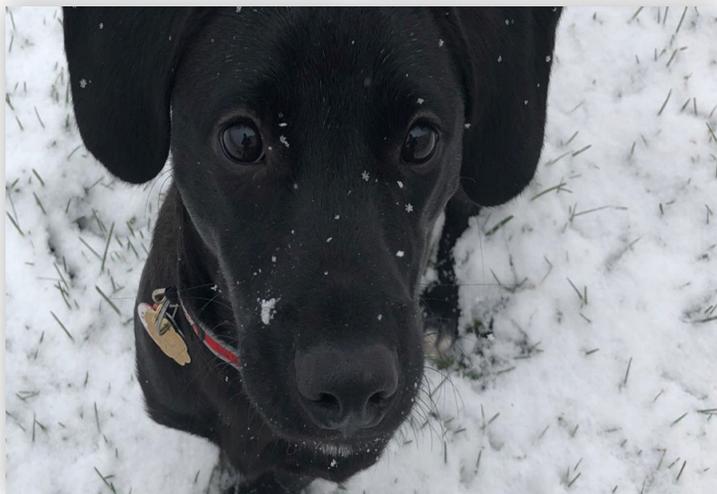


SOME WORDS FROM AN AFH FOSTER MOM

We wanted to share this email with you from one of our foster moms, Victoria Rohweder. It illustrates why fostering is so important and why foster parents are crucial to helping dogs become socialized and healthy. Victoria didn't give up on her pup because he wasn't perfect and needed a little extra time and help. She gave him what he needed to become healthy and sociable.

I wanted to share some side by side photos of our first ever foster Apollo. We had Apollo for 35 days (Oct 15- Nov 19) and he really opened my eyes to why fosters are so important. He and his brother had really bad demodectic mange and were very skittish when we first met them. By the time Apollo was ready to leave for his forever home almost all his hair had grown back and he was the most loving and playful little guy.

The first photo is of Apollo on the day he came off the transport. The photo of him in the car is the day he went to his family, and the third photo was sent to me by his new family a week later. His new family sent me the third photo and thanked us for watching over him until he was able to go home to them. Murphy is his new name and I'm so happy we were able to be a part of his journey to find his forever home.



HAPPY 12TH

R E U N I O N



Jeannie Ahlberg volunteered with AFH 12 years ago when we rescued Missy and her pups from a shelter in West Virginia. She fostered this little family and when the puppies were all adopted, Jeannie adopted Missy. She has kept in touch with some of the adoptive families and wrote to tell us that they recently had a 12 year reunion! Jeannie tells us that "Little did I know the many hearts that would be full and friendships we'd make because of these dogs. Love has multiplied and my heart is full".

I DON'T WANT A DOG...

AFH adopter Lynette Loveridge didn't want a dog. Zero changed her mind. Lynette's story about how and why she adopted Zero won a \$10,000 grant for AFH in the 2017 Petco Holiday Wishes Campaign! We are grateful to Lynette and her family for adopting Zero and sharing their story with us (and the world!)

Zero, the three legged Hero!!

"I don't want a dog!!!" I had said these words over and over again for years! Being the mother of four children ranging in age from 4 to 12, I had absolutely NO desire for any more work on my plate. I couldn't think of a single thing I liked about dogs! And yet, the constant begging and negotiating from my children was never ending! Years went by and I firmly stood my ground with no problem at all. But this last year, all things changed.

The dog decision was on the forefront of my mind and this is why. My oldest child, Carson, started middle school. Sounds innocent enough except that middle schoolers these days can be MEAN, NASTY, and completely unaware of the harm they do to their peers. Carson was bullied and teased and I watched as his confidence plummeted. It was devastating. He is successful in school, has many talents, and is kind. But a few kids made it nearly impossible for him to feel confident with his peers and even with himself. He started feeling anxious and depressed and had a hard time even having the courage to go to school. The stress and worry that filled our house was almost tangible.

We tried to help him from every angle we could, but nothing seemed to give us the results that we prayed so hard for. We sought help from professionals in and outside of school. But there was still one nagging thought that kept coming to my mind. Carson needs a dog. Someone who was always there, always listening, loving him unconditionally, and giving him the love and confidence to keep going. I realized that the love of a dog was different than the love we could give him and it

might be just what he needed. But I don't like dogs! I didn't want a dog! With A LOT of dragging my heels, I searched for the perfect dog for Carson, and for the rest of the family. And I prayed that we would find just the right one.

I was drawn to an adorable 6 month old tripod that we later named Zero. His story of being hit by a car and rescued, but having to lose a leg, was inspiring and motivating. Everything fell into place and we adopted Zero only a month ago. School started and the anxiety and depression we were terrified of happening again never entered our home. Zero has brought so much joy and peace into our home that despite my stubborn efforts to proclaim that I am NOT a dog person, he is quickly changing my opinion. I don't totally understand how, but I am witnessing firsthand how therapeutic and comforting a dog can be. He is exactly what my 12 year old needed and exactly what our family needed. I look at him now and thank him for being my secret weapon in parenting. Thank you Zero, my hero!!!

