



Calendar of Events

Ongoing Events

Every Day: Cat adoptions at the Petsmart Luv-a-Pet Center in Bloomingdale

Every Saturday from 11–3: Cat and dog adoption shows at Petsmart locations

Upcoming Events

Please visit our website at www.almosthomefoundation.org for more information about these events.

August 28, 2011: Hogs for Dogs Event

September 9–11, 2011: National Adopt-a-Thon at Petsmart locations

September 18, 2011: Running for Rescue 5K & Dog Walk at 2 Pierce Place in Itasca

November 11–13, 2011: National Adopt-a-Thon at Petsmart locations

December 3, 2011: Annual Holiday Dinner & Silent Auction at The Meadows Club in Rolling Meadows

View our adoptable pets on our website

www.almosthomefoundation.org

Don't forget, you can also view our Paw Prints Newsletter online in the "Events & News" section!



ADOPT-A-THON WEEKENDS

Every year, AHF participates in the four Petsmart Charities National Adoption Events. Each adopt-a-thon lasts for three days, during which every adopter receives freebies from sponsoring companies. This includes a special adoption packet with extra information and coupons.

There are two adoption weekends coming up. They will be held at our usual Petsmart locations in Bloomingdale and Schaumburg. The first adopt-a-thon will be from **September 9–11, 2011**. The second one will be from **November 11–13, 2011**.

We have lots of cats and dogs in need of forever homes. We hope to see you at one of the adopt-a-thons!

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Heather Lydon (Co-Editor/Lead Writer)
Laura Ellingsen (Co-Editor/Designer)
Deanne Blenkle
Paul Blenkle
Kathi Rose

... & all AHF volunteers
and donors

Oldies but Goodies



Gabriel



Maxamoe



Faith



Joie-Anna

Senior pets have a special place in the hearts of animal lovers. They're the mellow and humble lovebugs of the crowd. They ask for so little—just a soft blanket to lie on, a kind friend to cuddle with, and the promise that they have someone who they can count on forever. Shouldn't everyone be so lucky?

If you've ever shared your life with a senior pet, then you know what we're talking about. Their wise eyes and gentle souls soften your heart. They give you so much to smile about. They trust you and have shared their life with you. You are their world—and they're grateful for all that you've done for them.

Most of all and best of all, senior pets know the meaning of unconditional love. It's what they're all about!

If you're the owner of a younger pet and dread those senior years...well, you might be surprised by how wonderful those years often are! Younger pets desire toys, treats, and constant attention. As seniors, you'll find your pets indulging in the simple pleasures of life. They'd rather spend their days resting on the couch. Then they'll snore the nights away snuggled up at your side.

To a senior pet, your home is no longer their boundless playground. Instead, it's a comfortable safe haven for their golden years. They still need you to pamper them just as much as before, but it's a different kind of pampering. Now all they want is TLC and hugs aplenty!

Senior pets still have their spunky moments. They're still filled with grace and loaded with personality. Yet, they seem calmer and even sweeter than they were in their younger years. They're probably looking a little gray around the edges— however, their loyalty never fades.

As your pets grow older, many things may change. One thing will stay the same: they'll always love you, and you'll always be their world.

So "mischief" isn't their middle name anymore. And maybe that coat of theirs has lost some of its shine. They're clearly not as young as they once were...but since when is that a crime?

See why animal lovers love senior pets? They may be older, but they're still good—better than good, many would say. That's why we call them oldies but goodies!

A Lifetime of Love



One of the goals at Almost Home Foundation is to place cats and dogs in loving homes that last forever. This goal is reflected in our adoption policies and in the adopter screening process. Educational efforts are continually undertaken and promoting responsible pet ownership is a huge priority.

What's the reasoning behind all of this—the policies, the screening, the education efforts? We want every adopter to understand the lifetime commitment they've made to their new cat or dog. We want to see pets being cherished and loved—not forgotten and discarded.

Sadly, not everyone sees their pets through to their senior years. Yes, things change in your life: you get married, you move, you have kids, you switch jobs...and where do your pets fit into all of this? Unfortunately, many people give their pets away when "things change." Sometimes it really is necessary to find a new home for your pet. And sometimes it isn't.

You should enjoy a lifetime of love with your pets. Please do what you can to honor the commitment you've made to them. Listed below are alternatives to two of the most common reasons that people give for relinquishing their pets. We hope the tips are helpful to you!

"I'm moving"

A new home for you shouldn't mean a new family for your pets!



Hinkley

Pet-friendly housing is everywhere. Depending on your situation, you may need to do some extra hunting for it. This is especially true if you're renting a home or moving to an apartment. Many landlords and apartment complexes don't allow cats or dogs. There are others that only allow smaller dog breeds. Still others require that all cats be declawed. Landlords and apartment complexes that do allow pets typically include an expensive pet deposit.

Renting a home or moving to an apartment with your cat or dog can be tricky business. Pet-friendly landlords and apartment complexes do exist, but you may need to do some extra research to find them.

"I'm having a baby"

Many people give up their cat or dog after they have a baby. It's really a shame when this happens. It's mostly due to false myths about pets and babies not being compatible. Did you know that a child is actually less likely to develop cat and dog allergies if they are exposed to the animals as infants?



Granite

There are resources available with information about proper introductions between your pets and your baby. If you take steps to prepare your cat or dog for the baby's arrival, the process will go much more smoothly. For example, you can play tapes of baby-related noises to get your pets used to the sounds. You can also get them used to baby smells (such as baby powder) before the baby arrives.

HOW LONG WILL MY PET LIVE FOR?

The length of an animal's life depends on many factors. Diet, exercise, quality of life, genetics, and overall health and veterinary care all play a role.

For dogs, a basic rule of thumb is this: the smaller the breed, the longer the lifespan. There are exceptions, but smaller dogs tend to live longer than larger dogs. Chihuahuas, Maltese, and miniature Schnauzers often live to be at least fifteen years old—while Bulldogs, Doberman Pinschers, and Rottweilers rarely make it past the age of twelve.

Cats typically live much longer than dogs do. It's not unheard of for a cat to live well into their twenties! The biggest difference in a cat's life expectancy has little to do with their breed. It has to do with whether they are indoor or outdoor cats. Indoor cats usually live into their teen years, while most outdoor cats only live to be 3-5 years old.

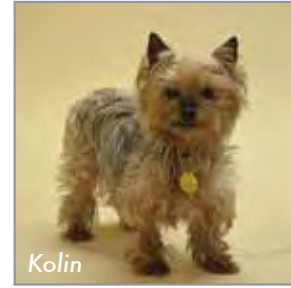
dandruff, and discomfort. Make an effort to groom your pet daily with a pet brush or comb. Even shorthaired pets benefit from this! In addition to preventing the above problems, daily grooming prevents hairballs and keeps their skin and fur healthier.

The Nails: As cats and dogs age, their nails become brittle and overgrown. Older pets are less active, which means their nails don't shed as natu-

rally as before. As a result, senior pets often need assistance with nail care. Excessive nail growth can be painful for cats and dogs, leading to ingrown nails or deep breaks. Make an effort to check and trim their nails at least once a week.

A daily brushing and weekly nail trim... such simple ways to help your senior cat or dog!

SENIOR PETS...Golden Opportunities to Brighten their Golden Years!



Kolin

The most important thing is that you honor the lifetime commitment you made to your own pets—always providing them with the love and care they need. Do you want to go one step further and help homeless senior pets too? Good for you! Our senior dogs and cats count on people with a heart like yours!

Of course, adopting a senior pet makes a huge difference in their lives. So does fostering one. But if you can't adopt or foster...well, can you still help? Absolutely! There are other ways that you can contribute. You can donate an item from the wish list. You can also donate money that goes specifically toward senior pet medical care.



Purrl

Want to raise awareness and promote senior pets? Share your copy of this newsletter with others, make flyers for adoptable senior pets, or distribute copies of the wish list.

If you've adopted a senior pet in the past, share your success story with others! If you adopted the pet from Almost Home Foundation, you can even submit your success story to our website. Sharing a true success story inspires others to open their hearts.

On the next few pages, you'll find information about upcoming events and fundraisers that benefit all of our animals—including the senior ones!

Thank you for all that you do. Never doubt it...in the eyes of homeless animals, every volunteer, donation, and effort counts!

GOLDEN WISHES Our Senior Pet Wish List

Many senior cats and dogs are currently residing in AHF foster homes. Their stay in foster care is almost always a long one. With the donation of one (or some) of these items, you can help make their golden years shine a whole lot brighter!

Food

- Senior dog dry food
- Senior cat dry food
- Senior dog wet food
- Senior cat wet food
- Vitamins and supplements
- Fancy Feast appetizers for cats

Supplies

- Dog and cat brushes and combs
- Pet beds and blankets: orthopedic foam beds, super soft beds and blankets
- Heated window perches for cats
- Water fountains for pets
- Nightlights
- KONG toys for cats and dogs

All donations can be dropped off during our Saturday adoption shows from 11 a.m.–3 p.m. at Petsmart locations in Bloomingdale (Gary Avenue) and in Schaumburg (Barrington Road as well as Golf & Meacham Roads).

TOP 10 REASONS TO ADOPT A SENIOR PET

10. What you see is what you get! Senior pets are full-grown and their personalities are fully developed.

9. No potty accidents. Older dogs are already housetrained, and older cats are already litterbox trained.

8. They are easy to train! With longer attention spans and previous training experience, older pets have more patience to learn new things.

7. With age comes maturity. Older pets are calmer and much less mischievous than younger pets. They got that puppy energy and those kitten antics out of their systems years ago.

6. They'll return the favor threefold. The affection, the great company, the intuitive and giving nature...it's all part of their charm.

5. You start off on common ground—because you both have a past. Think of the lifetime of tales they are waiting to share with you!

4. All they need is love! Senior dogs make great cuddle buddies at naptime. Senior cats just want to settle into your lap for long, quiet purr-fests.

3. They take joy in the simple things, and teach you how to do the same.

2. They need you...and doesn't it feel nice to be needed?

1. You will truly be changing the life of an animal in need. In their eyes, you are more than just their second chance. You are also their hero!

Thank you so much for helping our sweet seniors!

Ask Freddy



Hard to believe I'm almost a senior cat! Going on 6 years old and still in my prime, I'm already thinking about good things to do NOW rather than later. Here are some tips I've picked up from my veterinarian friends, books, and of course, my human companion.

Keep up the exercise routine: Make sure your favorite human partner continues rolling those balls and fluffing those feathers! Hide and seek in a paper bag is always fun (if it's a paper bag, remember to cut off the handles). Exercise keeps our joints moving and the fat off our figures.

- **Visit your veterinarian regularly:** Vets can detect early signs and take action before they become serious problems.
- **Get lots of protein:** Cats need more than other four-footers...
- **Nutrition:** If your human companion is considering a senior diet, make sure they confirm with your veterinarian that the food chosen is the best for you.

We all want to age gracefully and be healthy in our golden years. A few small steps can ensure that we live happily ever after!

If you need anything, Freddy@almosthomefoundation.org is the best way to contact me. Enjoy the summer and all the sunshine!

xoxo Freddy 



- **Drink water:** Water intake should increase in the warm weather and should remain at a stable level as we age.
- **Get lots of sleep:** As if this is a problem for us cats! An undisturbed nap in the sunshine is a true energy renewer.

YOUNG AT HEART

You're only as old as you feel, right? This page is filled with information about helping your older pets feel young again.

Sensory Changes

Cats and dogs experience sensory changes as they age just like humans do. They adapt to these changes, but there are things you can do to help them feel more comfortable. Also, don't just chalk it up to old age. If your pet has trouble seeing or hearing, schedule a vet appointment.

Eyesight is a big one. As their vision wanes, it becomes difficult for cats and dogs to navigate—especially in the dark. It's a good idea to place nightlights around the house for them. The best locations for nightlights include eating areas, stairways, favorite sleeping spots, and (for cats) litterbox areas. Also, avoid rearranging your furniture. It's easier for older pets to navigate when they know where everything is.

Hearing loss is common in senior pets. They may startle more easily, so don't approach them unless they can see you. You may need to use a louder voice when talking to them. It also helps to clap your hands or tap your feet to get their attention. They will feel the vibrations from such movements, even if they can't hear them.

The sense of smell can also decline. This is serious for cats, because they depend on scent for appetite. Try to purchase food with a stronger smell to it. Heating up their food in the microwave also increases the odor.



Escargot



Toula

MEWS N NEWS

Senior cats have special needs, so here are some items to consider for your older companion:

- As dogs age, their metabolism changes and their calorie needs decrease. The same is NOT true for cats. Their energy needs stay the same throughout adulthood. Obesity is one of the main health problems of middle aged (6-8 years) cats. It occurs less often by the age of ten and gradually decreases after that.
- Some studies show that senior cats don't digest and absorb fat as well as younger cats do. Older cats may need to consume fat that is more digestible to get the same amount of energy.
- The protein needs of cats are higher than the protein needs of many other animals. Inadequate amounts of protein in the diet can impair immune function. Unless the cat has a health condition which calls for protein restriction, an older cat should not be placed on a protein-restricted diet.
- Water intake is also important to keep in mind with senior pets. Older cats may not drink sufficient amounts of water, which can lead to constipation and dehydration, especially in cats with kidney disease. Set up extra bowls of water or (even better!) a pet water fountain for your dog or cat. Adding water to canned food also helps. You can also add flavoring to their water.

Please consult your veterinarian before making changes to your cat's diet. Together you can have a healthy, happy and loving senior companion!

A Second Chance at Happily Ever After: SENIOR PET ADOPTION

It's heartbreaking when an elderly cat or dog winds up homeless. Over the years, countless senior pets have found a second chance through Almost Home Foundation. They are harder to adopt out, but no less deserving of a home and family.

People tend to assume that an older pet must have been discarded for a reason. Sure—the reasons range from “he's not a cute puppy anymore” to “I had a baby and don't want my pets anymore.” Other people give up their pets when they move. Still others give them up when they encounter financial difficulties. Many older pets also become homeless because their owner died and nobody in the family could take them.

The reasons rarely have anything to do with the animal itself. With amazing personalities and a love for life, they are homeless through no fault of their own.

So who in the world would want a senior pet? Around here, that question is met with a knowing smile. Did you know that the feline directors adopted a 12-year-old calico before they were even involved in rescue work? Sweetie lived up to her name for another ten years. Another volunteer adopted an 18-year-old black cat on Valentine's Day 2010. Over a year later, Boomer is still going strong. So be prepared: when you meet a senior pet, your heart often gets stolen!

Senior pets are ideal for senior citizens. They are also ideal if you're looking for a companion for a current older pet. If you want a calm, quiet, and gentle pet—skip the kittens and puppies. An older pet would be a much better match for you. And if you're someone who just wants to give a “hard-to-adopt” pet a chance, you truly can't go wrong with a senior!

Photos of some of our rescued seniors are shown throughout this newsletter. Some have already been adopted, while others are still waiting for a home. Take a look at their beautiful faces...don't you agree that they all deserved a second chance, regardless of their age?

People are usually scared off by the words “senior pet.” They're afraid of the heartbreak that may result later. While we can never guarantee the length of an animal's life, what we can guarantee is this: that elderly cat or dog in your arms desperately needed a hero—and they found one in you.

Simply put, it's not about how long their lives last. It's about treasuring every moment you are blessed to share with them.

KOI AND SPICE, TWO HUMBLE SWEETHEARTS IN NEED OF A FOREVER HOME

Koi and Spice are brothers who lost their owner after she died from stage IV cancer. Before her death, she ensured that her cats would have a foster home with Almost Home Foundation. She wanted them to always be in loving hands.

The brothers are gorgeous, fluffy felines with hearts of gold. Koi is a super friendly and talkative lovebug. He immediately perks up when someone enters the room, and always wants to be at your side! Spice is a quiet and dignified gentleman. Calm and relaxed, his purr motor starts rumbling the second your hand touches his fur.

Both of them are front-paw declawed and in good health. They would love to be adopted together.

At 8-10 years old, Koi and Spice are considered seniors. Translation: they're not “highly adoptable.” But they have showstopper looks and shining personalities. All they want is a home and family. Please help them find a second chance at happily ever after. You can contact us about them at cats@almosthomefoundation.org.



Hoskya



Sugar



Koi



Spice

Purchase a calendar or feature your pet!

www.events.org/ahf2012calendar

Who Rescued Who?

A tribute to the pets that make our lives whole



Almost Home Foundation

2012 Calendar

Reserve featured pet of the month

Submit picture and biography of your rescued pet for a specific month - \$100 which includes calendar

Reserve border spot

Submit picture of any favorite pet - \$8

In memory of

Submit pet's name - FREE

Calendar

\$20

HOGS FOR DOGS

PRESENTING OUR 3RD ANNUAL
Cruise for a Cause

JOIN US FOR A SCENIC
MOTORCYCLE AND
CLASSIC CAR RIDE TO
RAISE MONEY FOR THE
RESCUE DOGS OF ALMOST
HOME FOUNDATION.

AUGUST 28, 2011

9:30 AM AT KOSTA'S
4053 W. ALGONQUIN RD
ALGONQUIN IL
(AT SQUARE BARN RD 1/2 MILE WEST
OF RANDALL RD, BEHIND WALGREENS)



\$25 PER RIDER/DRIVER
\$10 PER PASSENGER
DONUTS, COFFEE,
WATER, AND LUNCH
INCLUDED.
RAFFLE, 50/50,
AND FREEBIES!

INFO OR QUESTIONS
CONTACT MICHELLE
AT 847.309.8717

Almost Home Foundation's Running for Rescue

5K race/3K dog walk

September 18, 2011

2 Pierce Place, Itasca

Come for the Run. Stay for the FUN!

5K run @9:00AM 3K dog walk @ 11:00AM

Followed by:

Kids Run and activities, Dog contests and Demonstrations, Music, Vendor Fair

Thanks to our sponsors

Volunteers and Vendors wanted!

For more information visit Almost Home Foundation's website.



5K Run and 3K Dog Walk Registration Form

5K Run Adult/Child without sponsors \$25/with sponsors \$20 (see online registration) prior to Sept 4 After Sept 4 \$30

Dog Walk

Adults with sponsors \$25/without sponsors \$20 until Sept 4. After Sept 4 \$30

Child 12 and under before Sept 4 - \$10/ After Sept 4 - \$15

SIGN UP OR RENEW TODAY!

Don't let your membership expire! Please check your mailing address on this newsletter to see if you membership is expiring soon. Don't miss out on our next issue.

General Membership - Individuals	\$25.00
General Membership - Family	\$40.00
Discounted Membership - Senior Citizens (65+)	\$10.00
Lifetime Membership	\$500.00

Benefits Include: Membership card, refrigerator magnet, quarterly newsletter, discounts to our events. Lifetime members will also receive an Almost Home Foundation t-shirt. All memberships are valid for 1 year from the date of purchase. **Coming Soon...a coupon booklet with some of our favorite vets, pet stores, pet services, etc will be included with your membership. We hope to have it ready by Sept. 1. All memberships starting from August 1, 2011 will receive this booklet when it becomes available.**

To renew your membership or start a new one please fill out the following and mail back or go online to www.almosthomefoundation.org.

Circle one: Individual Family Senior Lifetime - t-shirt size S M L XL (lifetime only)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Mail to: Almost Home Foundation, Attn: Memberships, PO Box 308, Elk Grove Village, IL 60009

If you are NOT collecting pledges, or are pre-registering you can mail this form with check payable to: Almost Home Foundation, 5K Race, PO BOX 308, Elk Grove Village, IL 60009. For online registration or to print registration with pledges go to: <http://www.almosthomefoundation.org>

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

AGE _____ MALE ___ FEMALE ___ T Shirt Size S, M, L, XL, XXL Child S, M, L

Waiver and Release: By participating in this Event I do so at my own risk. I assume all risk of injury, illness damage loss to me or my property that might result, including, without limitation, any loss or theft of personal property. I consent to medical treatment in the event of an injury, accident, and/or illness during the Event. I agree of behalf of myself (and my personal representatives) to release and discharge the organizers of this event, directors, all sponsors and their representatives all claims or causes of action arising out of their negligence. I acknowledge that I have carefully read this Waiver and Release and fully understand that it is a release of liability. By my signature below, I am waiving any right that I may have to bring legal action to assert any claim against any and all event sponsors for their negligence. I hereby grant full permission to any and all of the foregoing to use my name and likeness in any broadcast, telecast, video, print media, reporting, or advertising of the Event without compensation.

X _____ DATE _____

Signature (parent or guardian if under 18)