



# PAW PRINTS

P.O. Box 308, Elk Grove Village, IL 60009 • 630.582.3738 • [www.almosthomefoundation.org](http://www.almosthomefoundation.org)

## Special Wishes

The pets on this page look pretty “normal” at first glance—beautiful, healthy, and happy.

Would you have guessed that they are both special needs pets?

Almost Home Foundation is dedicated to giving homeless dogs and cats a second chance at life—regardless of age, breed, fur color, or disabilities. Over the past seven years, we’ve shared our hearts with countless dogs and cats who just happened to have special needs.



The fuzzy puppy on this cover is **Schnitzel**. She arrived in our care with a serious heart condition. Money was raised and she underwent a life-saving surgery right before Christmas. Now, Schnitzel is doing wonderfully while she recovers in her foster home!

Special dogs have arrived in our care with a range of issues, including heartworm, mange, malnourishment, injuries, and broken bones. Some dogs



Schnitzel

have even needed leg amputations. We’ve rescued dogs who suffered from blindness, deafness, and other lifelong disabilities. Once, a cleft palate puppy requiring around-the-clock care even attended a wedding with his foster mom!



Belle



**Belle**, our kitty cover girl, is our most recent special needs kitten. She only has one eye. Her disability doesn’t slow her down at all—she jumps, runs, climbs, and plays with the boundless energy of any other kitten!

Last year, we had two wobbly-legged kittens with permanent motor issues. We’ve rescued cats with diabetes, kidney stones, hyperthyroidism, and heart conditions. Others had frostbite wounds, a missing leg, or tested positive for FIV. Many cats have needed expensive surgeries for broken bones and medical conditions. Numerous deaf or blind cats have also come through our foster homes. Once, we had two one-eyed mom cats at the same time!

These animals have special wishes for a chance at life despite their unique needs. They’re more expensive to care for and take longer to find homes for. They’re the ones who need more donations, more medical attention, and, very often, more time in foster care.

We have special wishes, too—for special foster homes and special adopters, and for special people to donate a little extra toward their care.

- If you’ve ever donated your time to animal rescue...**
- If you’ve ever given money to help an animal in need...**
- If you’ve ever adopted a special needs pet, from anywhere...**

## THANK YOU!

**FOR HELPING THESE SPECIAL WISHES COME TRUE.**



# Resolve to Get Involved in 2012!

**Do you enjoy planning activities?**

**Do you like working in the background, just helping out when needed?**

Most likely we have something for you to do!

Now is a great time to jump into fundraising! We are looking for new volunteers to join Almost Home Foundation's fundraising team.

It's difficult for any not-for-profit organization to raise money—and finding volunteers to organize fundraisers can be even more difficult. More volunteers are always needed to help raise the money to keep Almost Home Foundation going.

We will be holding a fashion show to benefit our animals in May 2012. This is an exciting and brand-new event! We need volunteers to make table centerpieces, handle registrations, organize silent auction items, and more.

In September, our annual 5K race will be held. The work involved for this event has already begun! We need several people to assist with a variety of tasks. These tasks include finding sponsorships and distributing flyers to local businesses. We need people to help get the word out about this event.

If you are interested in getting involved with our events and fundraisers, please join the team! We can also add you to our email list, which keeps people updated on available volunteer opportunities. In addition, you can attend our fundraising meetings. These are held at the Schaumburg Library on the last Thursday of each month, at 7:00 pm.

We are always looking for new ideas, too! If you would like to get involved or simply share a fundraising idea, please contact us at [ahfevents@gmail.com](mailto:ahfevents@gmail.com). Thank you for your interest!

Anna Mueller  
Fundraising and Events Director



**Moretti's**  
Ristorante & Pizzeria

Almost Home  
Foundation

**ALL DAY FUNDRAISER**

**ENJOY OUR AWARD WINNING PIZZA & CONTRIBUTE FUNDS TO THE FOUNDATION**

Must Mention Almost Home Foundation Fundraiser When Ordering - Please Present This Flyer - Reservations Are Requested - Dine-In, Delivery or Carry Out (5-6 Mile Delivery Zone)

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 29<sup>TH</sup> ONLY**

**MORETTI'S WILL DONATE TO - Almost Home Foundation**

15% of your order from our restaurant menu not including tax and gratuity. Other discount offers not valid on fundraiser days.

**SCHAUMBURG**

**BARTLETT**

**MOUNT PROSPECT**

**1893 Walden Office Square • (847) 397-4200**

**1175 W. Lake St. • (630) 837-4992**

**1799 S. Busse Rd. • (847) 593-2200**

# SEEING WITH OUR HEARTS

Abandoned at a high-kill shelter, Talia the puppy needed someone to help her. Little Talia was born without eyes! Luckily, AHF was able to rescue her.

We won't turn away an animal just because their eyes aren't perfect. Finding homes for blind dogs isn't always easy, though. They make amazing companions—all they need is some extra help!

The key to living with a blind dog is to focus on the senses that they DO have. We hope these tips are helpful:

- When approaching a blind dog, speak to them and make big footsteps. They can feel the vibrations!
- Put bells on the collars of your other pets. Now your blind dog can hear them coming! Attach bells to your own shoelaces or jewelry, and they can hear you coming, too.
- Running water fountains make great water bowls. They can hear the water dripping!
- Buy noisy toys, such as balls with bells or squeaky rubber bones. Also, treat-dispensing toys engage their sense of smell!
- Use different air fresheners to help them identify rooms.
- Vary textures in different areas: food bowl mats, rugs, pillows. Textured runners are helpful in hallways!
- Make your home easy to navigate. Keep your floors free of clutter and avoid rearranging furniture.
- Arrange a "comfort zone" with their bed/crate, food, toys, and other comfort items. They can go to their comfort zone for reassurance when needed.
- Their ID tag should state that they are blind.
- Put an "I'm Blind" bandana on them during walks. This will alert others to take care when approaching your dog.
- Train them to understand unique commands, such as "Up" and "Down" for walking up or down steps.
- A companion dog with eyesight can help your blind dog navigate and gain confidence.

Still think living with a blind dog would be too hard? Talia's family didn't. That's right—our Talia was adopted into a loving family!

Special dogs teach us special lessons. From Talia to you: **Blind dogs can't see with their eyes, so they see with their hearts instead... and they teach us to see with our hearts, too.**



View our adoptable pets on our website  
[www.almosthomefoundation.org](http://www.almosthomefoundation.org)

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

# Mews -N- News



Miracle

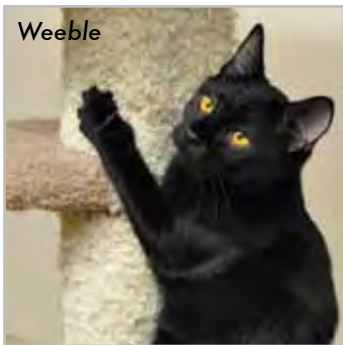
Everyone loves a happy ending! Meet some special needs cats from AHF—all of whom found very happy endings.

The volunteer saw her behind a cage door, huddled in a corner. Found outside and judged too feral for adoption, she was destined to be a barn cat. But there was something in her eyes

asking for help...so the volunteer became Miracle's foster mom. Several months later, Miracle found a forever home!

The young calico was almost out of time at the shelter. She was rescued into an AHF foster home. Three days later, Mercedes surprised us with three kittens! Her kittens were quickly adopted, but a severe infection left Mercedes with only one eye. Lovable and charming, she is now a diva in her forever home!

A black kitten, in a shelter, with neurological trauma—three



Weeble

strikes for most youngsters, but again, AHF to the rescue. With an ungainly gait (his back end could never catch up), he was named Weeble...because they may wobble but they never fall down! After months of TLC, Weeble went out to face the world. A wonderful family came from Wisconsin to meet him. It was love at first sight! We continue receiving emails and photos to this day...and Weeble is now a Packers fan!

A tiny orange ball of fur, it was obvious from the beginning that she was special. A disease caused her legs to bend inwards while in the womb. But Marmalade was a fighter and never gave up. She survived many medical issues with special care and love. A wonderful person saw past the special needs to a lovable kitty and POOF—a forever home!

A black kitten with severe eye issues, he was named "Chance" because we gave him a chance at life after a shelter cage. Another very happy adoption, we get VIDEOS of Chance!

As the months go by, we volunteers sometimes get discouraged. But then we look at those special faces—and remember that there is a special forever home for every one of our special animals.

Are you a future special family?

**Don't let your membership expire! Please check your mailing address on this newsletter to see if your 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.

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

**SIGN UP OR RENEW TODAY!**



# Ask Freddy



As this edition is about special needs pets, I want to introduce some of my special adoptable friends. Their special need is that they want to be only pets. When people hear "special needs," they usually think of a medical need...but my friend's needs are just as special. So, meet my buddies!

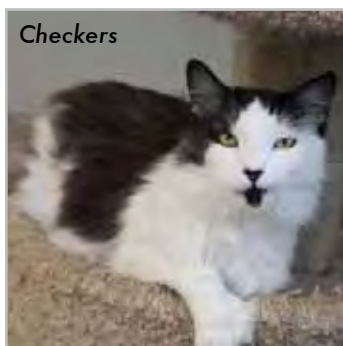
PJ is a tuxedo boy who steals kisses and entertains everyone with his antics! His bandit mask is a cover for his playful ways and love for life. He wants to reign supreme as the king of your heart.

Satin is a gorgeous, deaf white cat. Born outside and unable to hear, can you imagine what she went through fending for food? And sleeping? How could she? Now she just wants a home and all your love for herself.



Dani is a black longhair from outside. On the petite side, life on the streets was tough. Trusting other cats is simply beyond her. A sweet and gentle soul, she will melt your heart!

Cosmos is a declawed, black-and-white longhair. Found on the streets, he had a stomach rash from nervous excessive grooming. Life outside was a challenge—and he thinks he deserves to be the only cat receiving your love and attention.



Checkers is another declawed, black-and-white longhair. She just wants to have you for love and company. She doesn't know or care why...she just wants it! She is calm and quiet, and loves the couch, windows, and you.

Nicholas the Persian has expressive eyes that hold you with their honesty. He will camp out by you for quality time, quiet affection, and petting. Sharing a litterbox with others isn't his strong suit, so he needs to be an only pet. Give him a chance and you'll receive so much love!

Special needs are truly in the eye of the beholder. These cats believe they're SO special that they need to be your one and only. For more information on them, please visit [www.almosthomefoundation.org](http://www.almosthomefoundation.org).

Remember, you can email me at [freddy@almosthomefoundation.org](mailto:freddy@almosthomefoundation.org). Thank you for sharing your home with a companion animal!

xoxo Freddy 

## THANK YOU TO THE ELK GROVE LEO CLUB!

The Elk Grove Leo Club collected over 2,250 cat and dog items for Almost Home Foundation during their annual donation drive last October. Donation drives always make a big difference in the lives of our animals! We want to thank all the club members for their efforts.



# Celebrating Little Paws & Big Hearts!



We celebrated our seventh year of rescuing animals at the 7th Annual Little Paws, Big Hearts Dinner, Dance, and Auction on December 3, 2011 at The Meadows Club. Thank you to everyone who made the event possible! From the music and dancing to the wonderful silent auction, the event was enjoyed by all.

This is our biggest fundraising event of each year. All of the money raised helps us care for the animals!

**Enjoy the photos & please join us at this year's celebration on Saturday, December 1, 2012!**



Left to right: Terri Sullivan-Victory, Linda Wyka, Chuck Hanson, Claire Sleigh, and Gloria Hanson





First Annual

# Fashion Show

May 20, 2012

Stonegate in  
Hoffman Estates

## How you can help!

- We are currently looking for volunteers to help make this event a success.
- Do you like modeling? We need about a dozen people to model clothing at the fashion show.
- Are you good at hand addressing invitations? Several volunteers are needed to help hand address invitations and to send them out in late March/early April 2012.
- Do you own a clothing boutique? If you're interested in showing your current fashions at our show, please let us know. We are interested!
- We also need donations for our silent auction.

If you are interested in helping out with the fashion show, please email us at [ahfevents@gmail.com](mailto:ahfevents@gmail.com) or call Anna Mueller at 847-858-0849.

*We hope to hear  
from you soon!*



P.O. Box 308  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60009



## Calendar of Events

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### Ongoing Events

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

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

### Upcoming Events

Please visit our website at [www.almosthomefoundation.org](http://www.almosthomefoundation.org) for more information about these events.

**February 10–12:** National Adopt-a-Thon at Petsmart locations

**February 11–12:** Spay Day Education Event at Petsmart locations

**February 28:** World Spay Day

**February 29:** Moretti's Fundraiser Night for AHF

**April 29:** Cat/Kitten Shower

**March 16–18:** 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Chicagoland Family Pet Expo at Arlington Park Racecourse (Booth Numbers 274 & 275).

**May 4–6:** National Adopt-a-Thon at Petsmart locations

**May 20:** 1<sup>st</sup> Annual AHF Fashion Show

**September 14–16:** National Adopt-a-Thon at Petsmart locations

**December 1:** 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Little Paws, Big Hearts Holiday Party

## 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 **February 10–12, 2012**. The second one will be from **May 4–6, 2012**.

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)	Uschi Bertrand
Laura Ellingsen (Co-Editor/Designer)	Paul Blenkle
Kathi Rose	Anna Mueller
Deanne Blenkle	Hal Baim

... & all AHF volunteers and donors