

Special
Edition
2020



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Special 2020 Year-End Edition



Welcome to the new year Almost Home Foundation supporters! As another successful year comes to an end, we want to thank you — our adopters, supporters and volunteers for everything you did, and continue to do to help us save the lives of unwanted, abused, neglected, and abandoned cats and dogs. We saved the lives of over one thousand animals this past year! This special edition of our newsletter highlights some of these dogs and cats we rescued. We hope you enjoy these amazing stories.

In addition to the hundreds of animals saved in 2020, we are also proud of some other accomplishments — the announcement of our new board members, the acquisition of the Guidestar Platinum Seal of Transparency and Top-Rated Great Non-Profits Awards, weekly training classes under our new outdoor kennel tent, our first ever virtual silent auction, and our awesome new kennel parking lot to name a few.

We are excited about the new year and look forward to rescuing even more animals in need of our help as we work on expanding our rescue program. Once again, thank you for all your support — we couldn't save all these lives without you!

Starlite



We could not believe that this little cutie was in a kill shelter. This may have been because Starlite has psychogenic polydipsia. This is a fancy way of saying that for some reason she always thinks she is thirsty. It is something that is diagnosed by the rule-out method, meaning that we had many tests run by veterinarians to rule out any medical cause for her constant thirst. All of her tests came back normal, so it is assumed it is behavioral. Given her age, it is possible that it is 'puppy polydipsia' and she may grow out of it, but that could take months, years, or it may never happen at all. Since she believes she is thirsty, she will drink excessive water to the point that her stomach hurts and she cries. Because of this, her water intake must be measured and divided throughout the day.

Hamilton



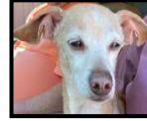
When Hamilton was welcomed into AHF, he was a 1.5 year old Labrador Retriever mix in need of Tibial Tuberosity Advancement (TTA) surgery in his right leg to repair his Cranial Cruciate Ligament (CCL), which is analogous to the ACL in humans. The goal of his surgery was not to recreate or repair the ligament itself, but rather change the dynamics of the knee so that the CCL was no longer necessary for stabilizing the joint. The vet suspected Hamilton's other leg was not stable and would need surgery down the road. Getting his right leg repaired as soon as possible would take the pressure off of his left leg and allow him to go on long walks pain free.

Marsh & Mello



Marsh & Mello are a beautiful bonded pair of sisters. They came all the way from Alabama to join the Almost Home family after they were diagnosed with the worst case of ear mites the vet had ever seen. Both appeared to be deaf. After treatment, however, we learned that Mello can hear! Marsh is the more outgoing of the pair, oblivious to sound but learning to respond to vibration. Mello is more shy because sounds sometimes still scare her since she regained her hearing after treatment.

Chihuahuas and Chiweenies



Six little ones were left at a kill shelter after their owner died. They all had varying degrees of medical needs – badly infected, swollen gums and rotting teeth (what was left of them) with destroyed bone tissue. They needed x-rays, gum repair/stitches, extractions and bloodwork prior to anesthesia. Several of them had nails growing into the pads of their paws. These seniors were in rough shape from the neglect that they had suffered and were in desperate need of our help. The two Chiweenies were picked up as strays. Buttercup was extremely emaciated. She was only 5 lbs but should have been 10 lbs. She was also heartworm positive and needed dental work. All of these babies also required vaccinations, microchipping and spay/neuter.

Veronica



Veronica was rescued from a kill shelter in Alabama. This poor girl was covered in fleas that caused her intense itching and scratching. This led to open sores, scaly skin, scabs, hair loss and a painful skin infection. She was also in pain from a ligament tear in her rear leg. She held it up to avoid putting pressure on it, and had difficulty walking. She was first treated with antibiotics and medicated baths to heal her skin and infection. Once her skin was healed, her leg was operated on. It was a long and difficult recovery. She required laser treatments and a lot of therapy.

Ringo



Ringo, a beautiful Boxer, came to us in pain and afraid for us to touch him due to entropion in his eye, which lead to a serious infection. Entropion is when an eyelid rolls in towards the eyeball, causing fur and eyelashes to rub the surface of the eye. It is very painful and often leads to problems such as conjunctivitis, infections and ulcers. Left untreated, entropion can cause blindness or even loss of an eye. Ringo had surgery on both the top and bottom lids. A section of skin was removed to reverse its inward rolling.

Everett



Everett is a baby boy kitten that we pulled from a high-kill shelter in southern Illinois. He had a broken jaw that went untreated. Luckily the jaw seems to have healed by itself and appears to be non-painful on exam, although he now has an underbite and his little tongue sticks out all the time! He may need dental x-rays when he is neutered to take a closer look at his jaw.

Kell

Poor Kell was brought to a kill shelter when his owner passed away. Kell's owner was very old and ill and unable to properly care for him. He had been neglected for a long time. He arrived at our kennel in pain - his nails had grown into his paws and he was covered in fleas. He was immediately treated for the fleas and taken to a vet to remove the nails from his paws.

Beatrice

Beatrice was returned to us in July. The adopter claimed that their new baby was allergic to her. Beatrice's foster mom noticed that she was eating a ton and urinating a lot. We sent her to our vet for a senior screening. We were sad to find out that she has both hyperthyroidism AND early stage renal failure. Sadly, these two diagnoses are quite incompatible. Treating the hyperthyroidism aggravates the kidneys which are already diseased. But not treating the hyperthyroidism means she will basically waste away. We are looking for the happy medium where we can treat the hyperthyroidism without aggravating her kidneys. Beatrice requires a lifetime prescription of a drug that needs to be compounded at a pet pharmacy. She is also on prescription food which costs \$2 a can and she eats 2-3 cans per day. She also needs her bloodwork checked at 30 days and then at regular intervals. Beatrice's foster family is taking good care of her, knowing that she is not adoptable at this time.

Shelton

One year old Shelton arrived with a skin condition/demodectic mange and an unusual walking gait. We were not sure what had happened to him or if he was in pain. It was believed that he may have been hit by a car a while ago, which healed on its own. During his neuter surgery, x-rays were taken of his back legs and hip. Femoral Head and Neck Ostectomy (FHNO) surgery was recommended by an orthopedic surgeon. FHNO is hip surgery where the head and neck of the femur (thigh bone) are cut off and permanently removed. Surgery was postponed until his skin condition healed. At that time, another set of x-rays were taken and the surgeon recommended to hold off on the surgery and exercise the injured leg to strengthen the supporting muscle. Another evaluation with x-rays will be repeated to see if exercise is making any difference.

9+ Kittens



During the “fall kitten season” we rescued the 6 bucket babies, Dumpster Dude, the quads from Roselle, the 6-pack from Wilmette, another one from the middle of the street in Roselle, the orphan from Carey, another one from the middle of the same neighborhood in Roselle, 2 white and possible deaf kittens, 3 kittens from a horse trailer, a kitten that was abandoned after his family’s house burned down, another two kittens from AL whose history is completely unknown, 3 wild and crazy black and white kittens that are more fun than most people ever experience in their entire lives, and the lone hitchhiker from AL that will wrap himself around your little finger before you even know what happened. How many is that? We are not counting! It is a huge financial commitment, but more importantly an easy labor of love! Only a few came with some kind of vetting. One look at their sweet faces and one listen to their mesmerizing purrs, it is impossible to say no. So, we say yes, and we find them fabulous foster homes, and we pay hundreds of dollars in vet bills per kitten, usually more than twice their adoption fee, and we save as many lives as possible. And last but not least, we find them GREAT forever families to enjoy their happily ever after. This is what we do, and we LOVE what we do!

Moo



Moo is an adult cat found wandering aimlessly around outdoors. He is blind and had a huge abscess on his back, likely from being attacked by another animal. He also came to us emaciated and with a severe upper respiratory infection, which he is still struggling to beat, likely because his immune system has been so challenged.

Evian



Evian is a baby girl kitten that we pulled from a high-kill shelter in southern Illinois. She had a broken leg and a broken tail that went untreated. Luckily the leg has healed quite nicely all by itself and she is now walking on all four legs.

Toivo



Toivo and Ava were two of eight dogs rescued from a hoarding situation in southern Illinois. They were on long chains with old refrigerators (doors removed) as dog houses and surrounded by junk throughout the yard. They had no water, and their food appeared to be cornmeal they had to lick off the ground. They were extremely timid at first because they barely had any human interaction. They were even afraid of a leash.

Ava



Tangey

Tangey came to us from Alabama. He was full of energy upon arrival. Tangey is what we like to call an “Insta-Cat”, a cat that is instantly comfortable with new people and new situations and are loving and affectionate toward anyone and everyone they meet. Unfortunately, Tangey started coughing and sneezing shortly after he arrived. We took Tangey to the vet and he tested positive for calicivirus, herpesvirus, and mycoplasma. The two viruses (calici and herpes) are actually rather common in cats, and just like with viruses in humans there is no way to treat them except keep the cat comfortable and prevent a secondary infection. Mycoplasma, however, is a bacterial infection that requires a long-term course of antibiotics to treat the illness. He will also get prebiotics and probiotics to keep his digestive system healthy while in treatment.

