

Summer 2021



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## Our featured pets

### Meet Roman!



Poor Roman spent most of his life living outdoors. When animal control found him, he was tied up and scared. He had scars all over his ears and the top of his head, but he was still very sweet. Unfortunately, Roman tested positive for heartworm because he did not receive any preventative.

When Roman came to Almost Home a few months ago, he was a very nervous boy. He was afraid to go for walks — most likely from never experiencing pavement and walking on a leash. He hated going back into his kennel suite and clung to the volunteers. Roman has come such a long way since arriving at AHF. He is beginning to respond to the commands come, stay and leave it and is now more comfortable with walks. He has become a kennel staff favorite with his giant head and the most soulful eyes you've ever seen. When he approaches slowly for some love, you feel like you are the most important person in the world. He is great with kids and loves everyone he meets.

He's looking for someone who is patient and kind to help him overcome his fears. He doesn't like being crated so he'd love someone who is home often. Roman is currently going through heartworm treatment and would be so happy to have a person or family to love and care for him during this challenging time. He would benefit from being in a home with few stairs and a yard. His activity level will be restricted for 8 weeks after the injections. Can anyone find this poor guy a place to heal? Please email [giannaa1997@yahoo.com](mailto:giannaa1997@yahoo.com)

### Meet Jenny!



Jenny was found as a local stray. Nobody claimed her and unfortunately, she tested positive for FIV, AKA "kitty AIDS".

As a result, the facility that holds strays had a hard time finding a rescue to accept her even though she is a super sweet, social, and loving young cat. The night before Jenny was scheduled to be put to sleep as an unclaimed stray, Almost Home received a desperate call. Almost Home does not discriminate based on breed, age, or health of an animal so we welcomed Jenny!

Jenny is fully vetted and actively seeking her forever family. Jenny is cat-friendly, dog-friendly, kid-friendly, and even vet-friendly! She likes everyone she meets. She greets her foster mom at the door every time she comes home, just like a dog. She enjoys high spaces like the top of the fridge, the top of the entertainment center, the top of the bookcase, etc. and will claim these spaces as her own by clearing anything in her way. Homes with lots of knick-knacks beware!

Jenny lives in a foster home with other cats who are not FIV+ without issue. FIV is only contagious to other cats, and it is only shared through deep bite wounds. Jenny is well socialized and peaceful. She is non-aggressive toward the other cats in her foster home. FIV is not contagious to humans or other species like dogs or pocket pets or birds. If you are looking for a lifetime of love and entertainment, come meet Jenny!



## Summer safety reminders

As we strap on our sandals, and harness our buddy to the leash for a summer hike, there are some things to keep in mind for the safety and comfort of our companion adventurers.

Heat is the main enemy and there are many ways to combat it. When walking, the shady side of the avenue is best for your buddy. When crossing streets, look for the shadiest point, where the asphalt is shielded from the sun. If you wouldn't want to walk across in your bare feet, consider it way too hot for their paws and it can burn them in minutes. Concrete isn't much better, so let your dog walk on the grass as much as possible.

Probably the most important thing to remember is to NEVER, NEVER leave any pet in a car or any enclosed outdoor space. The temperature can rise to over 140 degrees in a matter of minutes. Leaving the windows open doesn't create enough air to avoid a dangerous rise in temperature and can expose your pet to the possibility of being stolen.

When going out pack some clean water and a collapsible drinking bowl for your buddy. Cool clean water is an important item to bring with you. Do NOT allow your dog to drink out of puddles, or bowls that people may put out filled with rain water or that other dogs have drunk from. These may contain toxins.

Something to watch out for is water containing a highly toxic organism called blue-green algae. It thrives in fresh water bodies such as ponds, lakes and rivers. Water with blue-green algae will have the appearance of pea-green paint, or have slime on the surface or blue-green scum around the edges. Do NOT let your dog swim in this water or drink any of it. It can cause severe neurologic or liver damage. If your dog takes a dip and shows any symptoms of illness, contact your veterinarian immediately.

When the temperature is high, go for that walk early in the morning or in the evening when the temperature goes down a bit. Stop for "doggy picnics" under a shady tree, give your buddy a drink of cool water and maybe a treat. Also, keep in mind that dogs with those pushed-in or flat noses are more apt to become overheated quickly. Go for shorter walks with them. Same holds true for older dogs, or dogs that are ill, overweight or dark colored.

Some dogs have a tendency to eat weeds, leaves or flowers. Be careful where you plant what type of flowers as many are toxic to dogs. If your dog hangs out in the back yard, don't plant Lillies, for example, back there. Check the internet for lists of plants that may be harmful if eaten. Plant them where your dog won't have access to them.

Fireworks are another summer safety concern. They are dangerous in the hands of amateurs and can cause fires and harm pets if they land on them. But even for pets that aren't physically near the fireworks, they can cause animals great fear. Don't leave your dog outside during fireworks. Many dogs escape and are lost from fear on the Fourth of July. If your pet has a severe reaction to fireworks, it might be a good idea to have a chat with your vet to see if it might be helpful to get some medication that will calm the animal while the fireworks are going off. There are also "thunder shirts" (for dogs and cats) which hug the animal's torso and calm them. These will help with all sorts of anxieties such as thunder storms, loud noises, and other traumatic events.

And while we're on the subject of pet clothing, there are also "cooling vests." These are wetted with water, wrung out, put on the dog like a coat, and held on with Velcro. They keep the dog cool without getting them wet. An excellent investment for those hot summer days. However, the cooling may not last for hours and hours in the hot sun. Check the information about this available at the point of purchase.

## Hairballs in cats

Hairballs may be disgusting, but they develop as a result of your cat's healthy and fastidious grooming routine.

When your cat grooms themselves, tiny hook-like structures on their tongue catch loose and dead hair, which is then swallowed. The majority of this hair passes all the way through the digestive tract with no problems. But if some hair stays in the stomach, it can form a hairball. Usually, your cat will vomit the hairball to get rid of it. Because hairballs pass through the narrow esophagus on the way out, they often appear thin and tube-like, rather than round.

Hairballs in cats are more likely to appear in long-haired breeds, such as Persians and Maine Coons. Cats that shed a lot or who groom themselves compulsively are also more likely to have hairballs, because they tend to swallow a lot of fur. You may have noticed that your cat didn't have hairballs as a kitten, but developed them as they grew. This is quite normal -- as cats get older they become more adept groomers and therefore more proficient at removing fur from their coats with their tongues, which means more hairballs for you to clean up.

## Fun facts

Bloodhounds can follow tracks that are over 300 hours old and can stay on a trail for over 130 miles AND their sense of smell is so spot on that it can be admitted as evidence in a court of law.

Cats have five toes on each front paw, but only four on the back ones. It's not uncommon for cats to have extra toes. The cat with the most toes known had 32—eight on each paw!

## Be a rescue buddy!

Kids, here's how it works. Just collect supplies and donations for the dogs and cats of Almost Home. You can do this with a group of friends, with a girl or boy scout troop, with a class, etc., or just by yourself.



When you are ready to drop off donations, contact Kelly at [greta.otis@gmail.com](mailto:greta.otis@gmail.com). She will arrange a drop off date and set up a tour of the kennel. You will get a special certificate and be featured on our Facebook page, if you wish.



## Ask Homer and Hope



**Homer, what is canine heterochromia and how does it affect a dog?**

Dogs with heterochromia had been said to have “ghost eyes” or “witch eyes” because they have two different colored eyes, either whole or part. In Native American legends, dogs with heterochromia were said to protected heaven and earth at the same time and pulled sleds faster. As a matter of fact, even cats and humans can experience this condition.

Heterochromia, derived from the Greek “heteros” meaning “different” and “chroma” meaning “color,” is caused by the lack of the pigment melanin in all or part of the eye. Although puppies are born with blue eyes that most often default to shades of brown as an adult, dogs with heterochromia have one eye that appears blue or bluish white because of a melanin imbalance. One cause is that the condition is passed through the genes, either by intentional breeding or by chance, if one or both parents are genetically predisposed. Another cause, less common than genetic, can be from an eye injury, cataracts, glaucoma or medications.

Heterochromia falls into three categories: heterochromia iridis where each eye is a different color; sectoral heterochromia results in a partly blue iris, but there is a color in common; central heterochromia mixes different colors in the iris. No treatment or cure is available for genetic heterochromia, nor is it contagious. Dogs with one lighter eye and one darker eye can still see out of both eyes, although some light sensitivity may occur.

Sometimes genes for eye color are linked to coat color. Breeders who desire a merle or dappled coat or one with white around the head may increase the chances for heterochromia by limiting genetic diversity. Unfortunately, breeding for heterochromatic eyes may result in a deaf or blind dog. Breeders must be responsible for their decisions.

**Hope, how can I keep my cat cool in the summer?**

Now that it’s summer, we can all expect the weather to get really hot. Although cats love to be warm all the time and enjoy sunbathing, they are just as at risk of dehydration and heat stroke as humans! It’s important to know how to avoid our furry friends from getting heat stroke.

The most important thing to do is to make sure your cat has plenty of water all the time. It’s also important to ensure that there’s a cool spot around the house for your cat to escape to. Although cats like to be in the sunlight, we don’t want them to overheat.

Brushing your cat daily is also helpful in keeping your cat cool. It’s very important to do so in the summer because matted hair traps heat. When your cat has a heat stroke or you notice that they need to cool down, damp towels will help. Damp a towel in cool water and place it on the warmest part of a cat’s body (their tummies, paws, and armpits). Since most cats do not like getting wet, it may be a bit difficult to have them stay calm when wiping the cat with a damp cloth.

Here’s some fun...Make up some ice lollies for your cat with some of their favorite treats or play with ice cubes. For humans they might be a cooling addition to a drink but for cats, ice cubes can provide a whole world of fun! You can also use cooling mats and ice packs in their bed.

Even though cats handle warmer temperatures better than dogs, it’s still helpful to know the signs and tips to keep your feline fiend nice and cool in the summer.

## *Kick off your shoes to kick off summer!*

Help us raise funds for our organization by donating your gently worn, used or new shoes – nothing with tears, holes or broken heels!

Collected shoes are used to support micro-enterprise vendors in developing nations.

We are collecting shoes June 1st through July 31st.

Please bind every pair by tying the laces or using a rubber band.

Drop them off at:  
Almost Home Foundation  
1800 W. Irving Park Road  
Schaumburg, IL 60193



There is a 24 hour donation bin outside of the kennel on the left side of the building.

## *Send a friend*



It's simple. Pick your friend's favorite animal (there's lots to choose from), write a personalized note, and **send a friend** will handle the rest. What a great gift for birthday, graduation, wedding, someone special or just for yourself!

Your gift will be sent in this **send a friend** box.



30% of your purchase will support  
Almost Home Foundation  
Offer valid the month of June

Go to:

<http://sendafriend.co/almost-home>

## *Surprise!*

*Check out our new website!  
It has been totally redesigned!*

*Adopt, don't shop! Let's keep spreading the word!*