

Fall 2021



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## Our featured pets

### Meet Aragon!



Aragon is believed to be a Lab and Husky mix. He joined the Almost Home Family in March as a small puppy. He lived with his foster until a family came to adopt him. He stayed with his adoptive family for a few months before he became a large rambunctious pup. Aragon's face can charm anyone with 'puppy fever,' and the kennel volunteers soon learned that he was used to getting what he wanted.

Since being at the kennel, Aragon has had the opportunity to socialize with other dogs, go on field trips to a nearby waterfall, and attend training classes with our dedicated volunteers. His favorite activity is splashing and chomping in the kiddie pools donated to our facility. Aragon has graduated from his puppy classes early in September, but his forever home would need to continue his education to ensure he maintains the important skills and manners he has learned.

He would do best with an active family that is willing to dedicate their time and energy to ensure he continues to become more confident and help him focus his energy. Aragon aspires to get his Canine Good Citizen certificate in the near future. He is a very smart dog that appreciates all of the volunteers that work with him on a daily basis and would love to find a family willing to continue working with him.

Please visit our website to complete an application for Aragon or Deano or to see which adoption event they will be attending so you can meet them in person.



Hope

Homer

### Meet Deano!



Deano is shy, sweet, and calm. He has been waiting a very long time to find his forever family. His estimated date of birth is 8/15/12, and he has been in foster care since 10/1/12 when he was just a baby kitten. We are not sure why he has been overlooked for over 3,250 days, but we do know that he is a very nice boy and deserving of a home to call his own!

Deano likes to be petted and brushed but is not fond of being held or picked up. He does like to be near you though because he truly enjoys human affection; like many cats, he prefers attention on his terms. He likes to play with his cat toys and rub his head a lot on his cat scratcher. He also likes to sit in his cat tree and look out the window, or just hang out in his cat bed.

Deano is a bit unique because he has a slight head tilt. The vets believe that he had an ear infection that went untreated when he was a baby that resulted in the head tilt. It does not bother him for the most part, although jumping down from high spaces such as his cat tree can be a bit challenging but he that does not stop him! He takes it all in stride.

If you are looking for a kitty companion that is calm, cool, and collected, Deano might be your guy!

## *Almost Home Foundation launches campaign!*

Almost Home Foundation has saved and rehomed 1,106 cats and dogs in 2020. This remarkable achievement, however, resulted in medical expenses exceeding \$300,000! To maintain our level of success we need to make a significant change. We are excited to announce our **CAUSE 4 PAWS CAMPAIGN**. The goal of this campaign is to raise money for the addition of a surgical and medical treatment center, including an expansion and improvement of our facility.

Performing in-house sterilization and basic vetting will significantly lower our medical costs. These savings will allow us to increase our rescue efforts as well as help animals needing more advanced care. It is important to emphasize that Almost Home Foundation does not discriminate based on age, breed, color, physical ability, or health. Some animals that we rescue arrive with health issues that require considerable funds for medical treatment. Not turning away an animal regardless of their medical needs is what we are all about!

We will have a veterinarian at our facility several days a week to provide dog and cat sterilization services, immunizations, minor surgeries, wound care, etc. Local vets will still provide advanced diagnostic services and treatments as well as emergency care for our animals at their hospital facilities, if needed.

The addition will expedite vetting, simplify appointment scheduling, and eliminate the need to coordinate transportation to multiple local veterinarians for the animals living at our facility. Available appointments for animal rescue clients are limited because our partner vets need to give priority to their retail clients. Also, coordinating available vet appointments with our volunteers' schedules can be challenging. An in house medical center will provide more prompt medical care for

the animals, better utilize our volunteers' time for training, socialization and enrichment activities and the dogs and cats will experience less stress.

Our facility was built in 1971 and served as a veterinarian office until we acquired it in 2013. Our 50-year-old building has always been in desperate need of maintenance and repairs and these repairs have been a continuous struggle.

Our kennel runs are sorely in need of replacement. They are in desperate need of a properly functioning drainage system, and natural lighting that will help to reduce animal stress. We would like it to be a safe and less stressful space.

The facility expansion will allow for a few added bonuses too! There will be room for a play area for our pups during inclement weather. We will be able to hold our weekly training classes on-site rather than transporting our dogs to an off-site facility. We can discontinue leasing storage space for our supplies. Our cats can have their own area rather than sharing space generally used for the dogs. Medical care rooms will be added for sick animals to prevent contamination throughout the facility. So many amazing benefits!

With your support, Almost Home Foundation hopes to raise \$500,000 to "raise the woof"! Please support our campaign by making a donation or by purchasing any of our available tribute items such as pet ID tags for placement in a wall art design, dedication stars for a wall mural, laser-engraved brick tiles, personalized benches or room-naming privileges. For more information, go to

[www.almosthomefoundation.org](http://www.almosthomefoundation.org)

Donations can also be mailed to  
Almost Home Foundation  
P. O. Box 308, Elk Grove Village IL 60009-0308



## Ask Homer and Hope



### *Homer, is it true that petting my dog is beneficial to my health?*

Yes, petting, an important interaction between dogs and humans, not only benefits a person's physical and emotional well-being; it is equally critical to the animal. Petting creates bonding time, fulfilling the need for comfort and security.

Consider the importance of canine therapy and emotional support dogs. They unconditionally offer patients and their families the closeness and love needed during times of duress. People with psychological conditions such as autism, dementia, or Alzheimers can benefit from contact with trained dogs.

How does petting reduce stress and anxiety, lower blood pressure, and even strengthen the immune system? Petting releases serotonin and dopamine; these neurotransmitters make people feel better. It also decreases the stress-inducing hormone cortisol and releases oxytocin, lowering blood pressure and heart rate. Conversely, this is also true for dogs because reduced stress levels encourage relaxation and reinforce positive behavior.

Secondly, the human immune system becomes strengthened when it comes into contact with germs that must be overcome. Petting a dog is a way of introducing these microorganisms to the body. Studies have shown that children raised with dogs have fewer allergies, asthma, and even eczema. Close contact through petting has even assisted service dogs to detect serious conditions such as low blood sugar and some cancers as well as seizures and strokes. Even though petting may not make health conditions disappear, it may create a healthy attitude.

Petting is a mutually beneficial interaction and a powerful way to bond but just make sure the connection is agreeable. Become acquainted and learn where the dog likes to be touched.

### *Hope, what do cat sleeping positions reveal about the cat?*

As all cat owners know, our furry friends LOVE to sleep. Sleeping for long periods is their way of conserving their energy. But did you know that their sleeping position actually shows what they are feeling? Here are some common cat sleeping positions and what they actually tell us!

**The Loaf:** When cats are asleep with their legs tucked under their body, this means that they are not deeply asleep. They are ready to spring into action, but are also enjoying their surroundings and are comfortable.

**Sideways:** When your cat is asleep sideways, he feels very secure and relaxed and will probably result in the cat sleeping in a longer and deeper sleeping state.

**Half Closed Eye:** This usually happens when cats are still alert about their surroundings and are ready to react to anything. Something is probably making the cat a bit nervous and he doesn't want to let his guard down.

**Curled Up:** When cats are curled up and their tail and head are curled towards each other they are relaxed and ready to get their sleep in. This is the most common position. It also has to do with their instinct, as this position is used in the wild for warmth and protection.

**Belly-up:** This means they are EXTREMELY relaxed and safe. Cat owners should definitely feel honored when their cats do this as that means they are comfortable enough to show their most vulnerable body part!

**Paw on the Face:** Similar to the curled-up position, the cat is ready to get their sleep in but does not want to be disturbed.

It's nice to be aware of the six common cat positions and what our cats are telling us so we can try to make their long naps more comfortable. Although all their sleeping positions are adorable, what is your favorite?

## Fun dog facts

A Greyhound would actually beat a Cheetah in a long distance race! Greyhounds are excellent long distance runners and can keep a speed of 35mph for up to 7 miles. Where the Cheetah is incredibly fast it can only keep its speed for around 200 - 300 yards, so they may have the running start but it would soon be surpassed by a Greyhound!

## Fun cat facts

Bengal cats love water. Don't be surprised if your Bengal cat follows you for a dip in the pool or the bath. This breed is fond of drinking water straight from the tap, swimming and goofing off with water when given the chance. Bengal cats love to learn tricks and perform. Super smart and eager to please, Bengal cats are quick at learning tricks like a dog and repeating them continuously. So, try teaching your Bengal to fetch a ball, one small enough for a cat, and see what else your Bengal can learn from there on out.

## Uh oh, cat needs a bath!

Fluffball, feline King of the House, thankfully, doesn't often need a bath. But once in a while he may find something to get into that requires soap and water to remove. Or you may notice him scratching himself. Maybe housemate doggy brought in something from outdoors that has jumped to him. Is it possible to give a cat a bath and live to tell it? Preparation is the key.

First acquire the supplies you'll need.

- Cat shampoo. Do not use human or dog or any other kind of shampoo
- Sink or small tub for the bath. Check the pet stores or on-line for pet
- A soft cloth to wash your cat's face and cotton balls to clean his ears.
- A container to rinse the soap off your cat, unless you have a usable ge spray nozzle.
- A towel for drying kitty after his bath.
- Protective clothing and gloves for you to minimize scratches.



Now it's time to get Mr. Fluffball comfortable being in the empty sink or tub.

First put him in the empty tub and play with him or give him some treats. Let him think it's playtime. Once he seems to take this calmly, put a small amount of lukewarm water in the tub and place him in it. Once he's accepted this, wet him down, but avoid soaking his face which will upset him. Then apply the shampoo to his body and tail. You can clean his face separately, wiping it with that soft cloth. Use the cotton ball to clean the outside of his ears. Do not put anything inside the cat's ears as it could cause injury.

Rinse him thoroughly and dry him off with the towel so he won't get cold. You can try to dry him with a low setting on a hair dryer but he probably will be frightened by the noise. In any case, be sure the setting is not too hot so you don't burn him. Also, there are special dryers just for pets. Look for them on the internet or at your local pet store.

There, now he's all clean. Wasn't that a breeze? Not really, but it can be done. If all else fails and you can get him in a crate, you could take him to a pet groomer and have a trained professional take care of this job. They have lots of practice and practice makes purrfect, or so they say.

## *Bathing a dog is easier, maybe?*

What's the difference between cats and dogs? One is that dogs usually need baths a lot more often than cats. Dogs are usually outdoors more often and love to roll around in smelly things and get dirty. They may come home with fleas or get "skunked." Generally, a bath once a month keeps them clean and their coats healthy. In spite of their different natures, the trick to successfully bathing Fido is similar to that of surviving your cat's bath: Preparation and practice.

Decide where you want to bathe your dog. Consider his size and breed to determine whether to put him in a large tub or a small sink. To get started, gently place him in the empty tub, give him a treat, and let him sit there for a while. Massage and play with him. What fun!!! Doing this will help him get comfortable there.

Before adding water, make sure you have all the items you need:

- Dog shampoo. Do not use human or other shampoo. (You may use baby shampoo on his face to protect his eyes.) Also, special medicated shampoo will be required to get rid of fleas. If he gets sprayed by a skunk, it will be good to have skunk-odor removing shampoo on hand. Follow the directions on the bottle.
- Dog conditioner. Not necessary but might be helpful to smooth tangles.
- Cotton balls. Good for cleaning ears, wrinkly skin and faces.  
Dampen with warm water.
- Sterile eye lubricant. This will help protect his eyes from soap and water.
- Dog Shower sprayer, or a cup or other container for pouring water.
- Fluffy towels for drying the dog and probably you. Hair dryer.
- Clothes you don't mind getting wet.



Before lifting him into the lukewarm bath water, thoroughly brush him. Get all the tangles out. Then gently apply the sterile eye lubricant to his eyes, and put cotton balls in his ears to prevent the soap and water from getting into them. Now he's ready to be washed. Soak him with the sprayer, or pour water over him. Be careful of his face, eyes and ears. Use warm water, not too hot or cold.

Next apply shampoo. Once he is soaped, rinse him thoroughly. Soap left on may irritate his skin so be sure to remove it all. Then put on the conditioner. Not all dogs need it. But dogs with undercoats, or hair prone to matting, can benefit from it. There are 2-in-1 products available which contain both shampoo and conditioner so you can wash and condition in one step. Be sure to rinse thoroughly. Wash his face with a warm, damp, washcloth.

Then dry thoroughly with towels and/or hair dryer. Be careful that the hair dryer is set low so as not to burn him. Your dog may help you by shaking while he's soaking wet. So wear clothes you don't mind getting wet. One more word of advice: Don't let the little miscreant outside until he is 100% dry or he will roll in whatever he can find to get back to his smelly old self. If all else fails, take him to a professional groomer to get the best bath and grooming.

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