

Summer 2022



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Our featured pets

Meet Starlord!



Starlord is an adorable 8-month old neutered lab who is looking for his forever home. Currently he weighs about 40 pounds and

we do not think he will get much bigger. He attends our adoption show every Saturday hoping to find his forever family.

He's very smart. He wants to be part of everything and loves being outside playing in the yard with other dogs. He loves chewing Kongs, Benabones and bones with marrow inside. Belly, neck/ear rubs are his favorites. He's good in the car and can jump into an SUV by himself.

When left alone, he relaxes in a large covered pen, but would also do well in a large crate. He is food-motivated and knows so much already like sit and down. He will give you his paw, and sit up to catch his treats. He knows that he is supposed to do his potty business outside, but may sometimes have an overnight accident.

His forever family will need to be experienced dog-loving people with another dog for him to run and play with. He hasn't been cat tested yet, but we can easily do that if necessary. Let's find Starlord the home he deserves!

Meet Gertrude!



Gertrude (aka Pretty Girl) is a beautiful Tortoiseshell cat that is almost sixteen years old. Her owner adopted her when she was a kitten but,

unfortunately, passed away at the end of 2021.

Gertrude was diagnosed as a hospice cat as she has five breast tumors. If you didn't know she had these tumors, you wouldn't know there was anything wrong with her as she does not look or act her age. Currently, she is not in pain. She spends most of the day sleeping in her bed. She can't wait for bedtime so she can curl up next to you and be cuddled.

She's shy at first but loves attention once she gets to know you. She loves her foster mom but does not like her other cats; therefore, it would be in her best interest to live in a home with no other pets except maybe a cat-friendly dog as she lived with a Chihuahua.

Gertrude is looking for a very special nurturing foster mom who will take on the challenge of loving her and extending her life to its fullest. She knows there is someone out there who will love a "Pretty Girl" like her. She would be a great companion for someone who has recently lost a pet and is trying to fill the void in their life so they will no longer be lonely.



Hope Homer

Can a buddy be the balm for your ailing heart?

Will adopting a pet help mend your broken heart? This may be literally possible. Scientific evidence from the American Heart Association suggests that dog ownership can have a positive impact on risk factors of Cardiovascular disease. According to the Center for Disease Control (2021), over 70% of American adults over age 20 are overweight or obese which can lead to heart disease. Diet and exercise are traditional self care components, however, the issue persists, requiring us to look for creative solutions.

The American Heart Association considered this and critically evaluated scientific studies surrounding pet ownership (cat or dog) and cardio vascular disease and identified these benefits:

- Lower systolic blood pressure.
- Lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
- Decreased response to stress.
- Improved resting heart rate and other autonomic functions.

So how does pet ownership impact heart health?

- Pets offer us valuable social support, bolstering motivation to maintain healthy habits.
- Dogs provide encouragement to walk, 54% more than non-dog owners.
- Dogs can provide a feeling of safety.
- Owning a pet impacts both physical and emotional responses to stress which regulates breathing and lowers blood pressure.
- The act of petting one's own dog has been shown to reduce blood pressure.

Dog ownership is a long term emotional and financial commitment. Thorough contemplation of your home situation is necessary before you adopt a pet, but if you have a heart to move forward, remember this quote from Caroline Knapp: "Before you get a dog, you can't quite imagine what living with one might be like; afterward, you can't imagine living any other way."

The importance of dog and cat dental care

The structure of our furry pets' bodies is quite different from ours in many ways. We don't have four furry paws, fuzzy floppy ears, or tails to wag to show we're happy. One thing we do have in common, though, is a mouth with lots of teeth. And our pet's mouth and teeth do need as much attention and care as do ours. Our pet's overall health can be very much affected by their dental health.

The first trip to the vet with your puppy or kitten should include an examination of their teeth and mouth. Included should be a discussion with the vet on how you can keep your pet's oral health and teeth in good shape. Dogs and cats can have many of the same dental problems as people: tooth decay, gum and periodontal disease, broken teeth. Just as with humans, it all starts with the buildup of plaque, leading to infections and inflammation of the teeth, gums, and structure below the gums. Left untreated, this can lead to serious health problems throughout the animal's entire body via the spread of the bacteria from the mouth to the rest of the body and organs.

Of course, all this leads to pain and discomfort. Some signs of dental disease are bad breath, broken or loose teeth, swelling and/or bleeding of the gums, pain when you touch their mouth, not eating or dropping food from the mouth, or, with cats, poor grooming. Prevention of oral disease and tooth problems involves brushing your pet's teeth, feeding them the correct diet and treats. Yes, you CAN brush your dog or cat's teeth. Some people even floss their cat's teeth. Honest, they really do. But it takes training which should start when they are very young.

Check with your vet for information on animal tooth-brushing products and tooth paste. DO NOT USE HUMAN TOOTH PASTE AS MOST OF IT IS TOXIC TO ANIMALS. Have your vet give your pet a thorough tooth and mouth exam at least once a year. You can also have your pet's teeth and gums cleaned professionally under anesthesia by your vet once a year. So, to keep that tail wagging and those pearly whites purring, look keenly after their dental health.

Summer heat safety reminders

-  NEVER EVER leave your pet in a car, truck, or any enclosed outdoor space. The temperature can climb rapidly to cause heat stroke.
-  **Walking:** Stay on the shady side of street and cross at shadiest area possible to avoid hot asphalt and concrete. Walk during the coolest time of day possible and let them walk on the grass if they want.
-  **Water:** Take along a supply of cool water and a bowl for your dog. Do NOT let your dog drink out of puddles or bowls people may leave out.
-  **Overheating:** Some breeds that have pushed-in or flat noses, and dogs that are old, overweight, ill, or dark colored, may overheat faster. Go for shorter walks.
-  **Cooling Vests:** Available in many pet stores, can be wetted with cold water and put on the dog like a coat, held on with Velcro. The dog does not get wet but is kept cool.
-  **Road trips:** Research ahead of time what pet-friendly restaurants and motels are available and if there is veterinary service along the way.
-  **Cats:** Keep the air conditioning on but give them a place to get away from it. If no air conditioning available, give them a place in the house to cool off, provide lots of cool, chilled, water and frozen treats. Keep kitty brushed and groomed.

Fun facts

In 2009 psychologists discovered that dogs are capable of learning the same amount of words and commands as a human toddler—specifically, a two-year-old child.

Cats have an extra organ that allows them to taste scents on the air, which is why your cat stares at you with her mouth open from time to time.

What's in a meow

Did you know that cats meow to people but not to other cats? Here's why that happens.

Meows are uncommon in cat-to-cat communication but frequent cat-to-human vocalization. Cats communicate with each other through scent, marking, body language, facial expression and vocalizing. Cat-to-cat communication can include caterwauls for mating, hissing to ward off an intruder or shrieking when hurt or afraid. Kittens meow to get their mother's attention but after they grow up that stops.

Cats meow to people because it works! Researchers have found that the vocalizations of the domestic cat have evolved to become more pleasant to the human ear as opposed to the vocalizations of the wild cat that seem to be more threatening. Humans are more sensitive to more high-pitched and more kitten-like meows and are more likely to respond positively—like we do when an infant cries.

Cats can learn to modify the characteristics of their meows to let people know exactly what they want. Some research suggests that based on the sound, experienced cat owners can identify the meaning of about 40% of the meows.



Ask Homer and Hope



Homer, what are canine dew claws? Are they important?

Dew claws are part of the canine evolutionary process. About 40 million years ago, early ancestors of today's dog needed toes to climb trees. Offspring with this genetic trait survived to produce paws with four toes and a small digit, the dew claw, slightly higher up each front leg and sometimes the hind legs.

All breeds are born with front dew claws while many breeds have hind dew claws as well including the Saint Bernard and the Great Pyrenees. A dog's paw print reveals four digits roughly comparable to a human handprint: pointer, middle, ring, and little fingers. The dew claw may be likened to the thumb and big toe. The front dew claw is more firmly attached to the leg muscle than the hind dew claw, making it more functional; the hind dew claw is less bony and floppier. Regardless of number, the dew claw does not touch the ground when the dog is standing still.

Basically, dew claws help with movement and grip. A dog running up a steep hill or getting out of water, for example, uses dew claws for stability and traction while a dog holding a stick or bone uses dew claws for a better grasp. Even digging is easier with dew claws. They may, however, be injured on undergrowth or branches.

Dew claw removal is not recommended unless medically necessary. For example, if the claw becomes overgrown, infected, injured, or ripped out, then surgery is humane. Other reasons given for removal are breed standards and show participation. Oddly, some breeds are required to keep them for AKC competition. For whatever reason, removal is a medical procedure requiring sedation and may result in leg or spinal injuries, including arthritis.

Hope, how can I keep my cat cool and comfortable in the hot summer months?

Cats have a normal body temperature of 100.4-102.5 Fahrenheit and can be vulnerable on hot days to dehydration and heatstroke. Consider these tips to keep your kitty cool and comfortable this summer:

- Cool water should always be available to your pet, and if you aren't going to spring for the new Coolin' Bowl or cat water fountain, a few ice cubes will keep the water fresher longer if kept out of the sun.
- Inside home temperatures should be kept no higher than 78 degrees Fahrenheit. Cats with thicker fur may require an even cooler temp.
- Elevating the cat's bed allows the air to circulate around it to help keep your cat comfortable.
- If your cat is panting or drooling or has a temperature over 104 degrees, they may need medical attention. Note that Persian cats with flat faces have a harder time cooling themselves by panting.

Catsicles are an easy to make frozen treat for kitties. Recipes can include goat milk or Catmilk (Lactose free for cats) with berries sprinkled in. Safe summer fruits your cat may enjoy include strawberries, blueberries and seedless watermelon (No grapes!). If your cat's tastes favor more gourmet flavors, catsicles can be made with tuna, chicken, or even freeze dried shrimp. Silicone molds are available in paw shapes or they can be frozen in the bottom of dixie cups. Either way, your kitty will love them!

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